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Office of the New Mexico Secretary of State

February 9 ·

RUMOR vs. REALITY: How are voter rolls maintained to ensure election integrity?

One of the main points of misinformation about voting and elections claims that voter rolls are not regularly cleaned and thus the integrity of our elections is questioned. This is a pernicious bit of misinformation that leads people to question the outcomes of our elections, so let's clear it up.

The voter list maintenance processes and procedures of the Secretary of State's Office and New Mexico county clerks not only follow all state and federal guidelines to keep our voter rolls clean and up-to-date, but go above and beyond those requirements.

During the voter list maintenance process New Mexico's election administrators, as required by law, must maintain and update their voter rolls continually -- everything from checking obituaries, receiving monthly reports from NM Vital Statistics about deceased individuals, and suspending or reinstating voters based on conviction notices from the Department of Corrections. This is done in conjunction with the proactive, pro-voter measures already in place in New Mexico, such as automated voter registration, all-mail special elections, and online and same day voter registration. All of these systems combine to ensure that voter information is up-to-date in New Mexico, resulting in our state having some of the "cleanest" voter records in the United States.

New Mexico also participates in the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC). ERIC uses information from motor vehicle departments, Social Security Administration records, and other databases to compare voters across all member states and securely shares this information with member states. ERIC FAQs: <https://www.sos.state.nm.us/.../voter-info.../eric-project-faqs/>

Additionally, County clerks send frequent election-related material to registered voters at their registration addresses and then use that information to do voter record list maintenance.

Much of the confusion around how voter lists are maintained stems from how people misinterpret data or simple clerical errors. As detailed in the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's "Rumor Control" website when debunking the myth that deceased people are casting ballots: "Taken out of context, some voter registration information may appear to suggest suspicious activity, but are actually innocuous clerical errors or the result of intended data practices. For example, election officials in some states use temporary placeholder data for registrants whose birth date or year is not known (e.g., 1/1/1900, which makes such registrants appear to be 120 years old). In other instances, a voting-age child with the same name and address as their deceased parent could be misinterpreted as a deceased voter or lead to clerical errors." (<https://www.cisa.gov/rumorcontrol#rumor21>)

Simply put, New Mexico has some of the cleanest voter rolls in the nation and we go above and beyond legal requirements to maintain voter list integrity.

Learn more about how states accurately maintain their voter lists at this helpful website from the National Conference of State Legislatures: <https://www.ncsl.org/.../elections-a.../voter-list-accuracy.aspx>

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